

Women's Language in the Communicative Styles of Female Lecturers in Indonesian University Context

by Murni Mahmud

Submission date: 16-Jun-2021 09:44PM (UTC+0700)

Submission ID: 1607515337

File name: The_Asian_EFL_Dec_2019_Vol_26,_Issue_6_2.pdf (9.58M)

Word count: 8277

Character count: 48098

The Asian EFL Journal
December 2019
Volume 26, Issue 6.2



Senior Editor:
Paul Robertson



³Published by the English Language Education Publishing

Asian EFL Journal
A Division of TESOL Asia Group
Part of SITE Ltd Australia

<http://www.asian-efl-journal.com>

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editor@asian-efl-journal.com

Publisher: Dr. Paul Robertson

Chief Editor: Dr. Paul Robertson

Associate Production Editor: Ramon Medriano Jr.

Assistant Copy Editor: Eva Guzman

ISSN 1738-1460



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Women's Language in the Communicative Styles of Female Lecturers in Indonesian University Context

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Abstract

Communicative style is an important aspect of teachers' and students' communication in the class. The use of communicative styles in the class by teachers can influence the success of interaction in the class. This communicative style can be influenced by many factors; one of them is gender differences. For that purpose, this article aims to explore the characteristics of women's language applied by teachers in the class. The researchers applied a descriptive qualitative research design. ²⁴ This research was conducted in one state university in Makassar and took two female lecturers as the subject of study. To collect data, the researchers recorded the teaching process of the two female lecturers in the class. The recordings which were taken three times for each lecturer were transcribed and analyzed ²⁹ based on the features of women's language proposed by Lakoff (1973; 1976; 2004). Findings from this study revealed that female teachers applied several characteristics of women's language in their teaching process. Female lecturers applied some hedges, intensifiers, some emphatic stress, question tags, and some super polite forms. This finding reveals that women's language is used by women in every setting of communication, such as in the teaching process. The communicative styles of the female lecturers were influenced by the notions of women's language. Findings from this study are significant in the discussion of language and gender in communication. The results are also

beneficial for practices in the language teaching process, as input for teachers/lecturers in ²⁴their effort to create effective classroom interaction.

Keywords: *females, female teachers, women's language, communicative styles, classroom interaction*

Introduction

Discourse on gender still becomes a debatable issue in today's society. There are a lot of problems in a human's life that can be affected by gender differences. Eckert (1998, p. 64) states that gender differences can be found in "different cultures, places, and groups". In fact, gender differences have become one of the important topics in any part of society. This is in line with what James and Berger (1996, p. 273) view that gender is "the most extensively investigated constructs of the social sciences".

Studies by Keeler (1990), Kuipers (1990), Hassan (2000), Ampofo, Beoku-Betts, Njambi, & Osirim, (2004), Itakuro, & Tsui (2004), Youngs (2004), Brumfiel (2006), Mahmud (2010), Shinnar, Giacomini, & Janssen (2012), Li (2014) had focused on gender differences in society and had shown that gender differences are one of the major topics of discussions in different areas in society such as in political and social sciences. Therefore, it can be stated that gender differences contribute a lot to the dynamics of society.

Studies in the field of education had also shown that gender differences had become the area of investigation. Hadidi and Monsefi (2015), for example, had reported that ⁶female teachers were more interactive, supportive and acted more patiently with their students' mistakes. They asked more referential questions, gave more compliments and used fewer directive forms, but, on the other hand, male teachers used more competitive styles in their classes, more display questions, and one could see more evaluation on their part, while they also used fewer acknowledgment forms than female teachers. Dera and Mahdi (2013) also confirmed that ³⁰female teachers reported less use of ICT in their instruction than male teachers. These studies show that there are different phenomena in terms of teaching and learning in the field of education which may be caused by the dynamics of gender issues in society.

Among those important aspects of education affected by gender issues is the way the teachers communicate in the class. Women perceive themselves as feminine, so they communicate more indirectly, elaboratively, and emotionally (Hippel, Wiryakusuma, Bowden, & Shochet 2011). Moreover, Attaran and Moghaddam (2012) analyzed the

speech content of female teachers and found significant differences among male and female teachers considering various categories of speech content categories such as linguistic dimensions, prepositions, psychological processes, and pronouns. These studies showed that teachers as the main actors in teaching have different speech styles to communicate with students. These different speech styles are affected by many factors such as age differences, gender differences, educational background, and environment.

the speech content of male and female teachers in the context of Iranian EFL classes

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One of the factors influencing those different types of communicating is related to the notions of gender differences in communication. This notion had been illuminated earlier by the prominent scholar in gender studies, Lakoff with her influential work "*Language in women's Place*" (1973; 1976; 2004). Specifically, Lakoff (1973; 1976; 2004) reveals ten types of speech features commonly used by women such as, lexical hedges or filler, tag question, rising intonation on declarative, 'empty' adjectives, precise color terms, intensifier, hypercorrect grammar, super polite forms, avoidance of strong swear words and emphatic stress. These types are claimed to be used more often by women than men as reflected in their way of communicating and therefore influence the forms of communication of men and women in communication.

Studies on women's language had been conducted in many different contexts. Women were found to have higher empathy than men whereas men are less forgiving (Mellor & Fung, 2012, p. 98). A study on women's language in Japanese society by Nakamura (2014), for example, proved that women's language is a socially salient linguistic concept and a hegemonic cultural notion in Japan. In fact, the Japanese believe that women's language has a long history peculiar to the Japanese language and consider women's language as one of its crucial characteristics (p. 1). Other scholars had investigated the gender across language and show that in many languages, gender can

be represented in the languages people used to communicate (Hellinger & Motschenbacher, 2015). Another study shows the differences between females and males in using the function words, neologisms/blog words as well as the use of tag questions and adverbs initiating sentences (Ali & Krish, 2016, p. 21).

In Indonesia, discourse on gender and education has also attracted the attention of the scholar of gender and women's studies. Damayanti (2014)'s study also ²⁸showed that the illustrations accompanying linguistic texts fortified the representations of gender asymmetry. ¹⁴Females were depicted more dependent than males and were also construed to be admirers of an action carried out by the males. A study by Emilia, Moecharam, & Syifa (2017) shows that ²⁶teachers and students can develop gender awareness in the classroom practices through the use of the textbooks since gender differences shaped the construction of the textbooks. These studies show that gender issues also contributed to the educational contexts of Indonesia and therefore, need for more explorations.

Women's language in Indonesian context had also been observed. Kuntjara (2005) had studied about gender representation in the language used by Javanese women. She found that women buyers were assertive and confident in achieving their desired price. The women were more assertive when they were the sole seller than when accompanied by a male seller. The male buyers, in contrast, were less assertive and less confident. The male sellers are assertive and confident. Kuntjara and Ronsumbre (2015) also found ⁸that the most dominant speech styles used by young female teacher are female speech style while ⁸the most dominant speech style used by the young male teacher is male speech style. In addition, Chandra and Yulia in their study (2018) found some women's language features which appeared in Nicki Minaj's comments such as intensifier, emphatic stress, filler, rising intonation, and lexical hedge. This appearance was influenced by some factors such as father's speech, ethnicity, the community of practice, and different social psychological perceptions.

Referring to these phenomena, the researchers concluded that teachers' ways of communicating in the class need to be further investigated especially in Indonesian EFL classroom. There is still a very limited study in terms of women's language in relation to teachers' communicative styles, especially in universities. Therefore, it was a fundamental requirement of the researchers to investigate the trends of ³⁹male and female teachers' communicative styles in the EFL classroom interaction. This research is then directed to identify the features of women's language reflected in the communicative

styles of female lecturers in the EFL classroom interaction. Findings from this study contribute significantly to the study on gender differences in classroom interaction. It becomes also beneficial inputs for practitioners of classroom interaction especially teachers and students in order to create effective classroom interaction by considering the gender differences and other factors which influence the classroom interactions.

Related Literature

³² Women's language

The beginning of the term 'women's language' began in the 1970s with Robin Lakoff's search for specific features of women's speech. Her book *Language and women's place* (1973; 1976; 2004) has been very influential. Lakoff proposed some features of women's language.

The first feature is the use of lexical hedges or commonly named hedging. Hedging functions a lot like ¹⁸ a mean to facilitate turn-taking, politeness, mitigate face-threats, but it is also considered a means of conveying vagueness purposely (Rosanti & Jealani, 2016). Thus, they play a crucial role in social interaction strategies. Lakoff decided to hedge ³⁴ as one of the characteristics of women's speech features and she (1973, p. 271) analyses ⁵ hedges as, "words whose meaning implicitly involves fuzziness-words whose job is to make things fuzzier or less fuzzy". He states that words and phrases manifest hedging power (like rather, very, in a manner of speaking) which sets some boundaries in how to interpret linguistic items as hedges. Lakoff (1973, p. 213) adds ⁴³ hedges, "interact with felicity conditions for utterances and with rules of conversation". Thus, setting the coordinates for interpreting hedges is manifestations which are conditioned by pragmatic factors. Meyerhoff (1992) stated the meaning of "hedge" is a word or phrase that makes the utterance seems less certain or less specific. Functions of hedges also elucidated into several situations, hedges become appropriate choice to let the utterances are vague or ²¹ to express uncertainty and they use intensifying devices to persuade their addressee to take them seriously (Hyland, 2000; Pan, 2011).

The second feature is the use of question tag. The ¹⁷ tag question is a syntactic device listed by Lakoff which may express uncertainty. We find that syntactically too women's speech is peculiar. There is no syntactic rule in English that only women may use, but there is at least ⁹ one rule that a woman will use in more conversational situations than a man. This is the rule of tag question formation (Lakoff, 1973, p. 53). Holmes (2001 cited in White, 2003) ²³ describes four different functions of tag questions, three of which do not follow Lakoff's original

proposal of tags expressing tentativeness. They are expressing uncertainty, facilitative, softening, and confrontational.

The third feature of women's language is the use of empty adjectives. Lakoff (1973, p. 53), said that these words aren't, basically "feminine", rather, they signal "uninvolved", or "out of power". Any group in a society to which these labels are applicable may presumably use these words; they are often considered "feminine", "unmasculine", because women are the "uninvolved", "out of power". This kind of adjectives called "empty" adjectives, which means that those only convey an emotional reaction rather than specific information.

Another type of women's language is the use of precise color terms. Lakoff (cited in Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 318), claims that women use color words like mauve, beige, aquamarine, lavender, and magenta but most men do not. Fine discrimination of color is relevant for women, but not for men. Men find such discussion amusing because they consider such a question trivial, irrelevant to the real world.

Lakoff (1973) believe that because women have been denied access to power in society, they use different linguistic strategies to express and secure their social status. Therefore, intensifiers are assumed to be used by women to indicate their different roles which they play in society (Samar & Alibakhshi, 2007; Tagliamonte & Roberts, 2005; Sharp, 2012). The basic intensifier is "very" and can be used with many verbs. Other intensifiers often have quite the same meaning as "very" but have other forms. A few examples of intensifiers are: *very*, *extremely*, *really*, *fantastically*, *remarkably*, etc. (Sardabi & Afghari, 2015).

Lakoff (cited in Holmes, 1992, p. 314), stated that hypercorrect grammar is the consistent use of standard verb forms. Lakoff said that hypercorrect grammar involves avoidance of terms considered vulgar or course, such as 'ain't', and the use of precise pronunciation, such as sounding the final 'g' in words such as 'going' instead of the more casual 'goin'.

Other features of women's language are the use of super polite forms and the avoidance of swearing expressions. Lakoff (1973, pp. 50-51) stated that as children, women are encouraged to be "little ladies". Little ladies do not scream as vociferously as little boys are chastised more severely for throwing tantrums or showing temper: "high spirits" are expected and therefore tolerated in little boys; docility and resignation are the corresponding traits expected of little girls. Women usually use softer forms such as "Oh, Dear!" or 'Darn!', while the men use stronger ones such as 'Dammit!' or 'Shit!'. It is implied here that women's

language is polite and therefore need to avoid using impolite expressions such as swearing words.

The last is the use of emphatic stress. Women tend to use words which are used to emphasize the utterance or strengthen the meaning of an utterance. For example, It was a *brilliant* performance. The word *brilliant* is one of the examples of emphatic stress. This word can be used to strengthen the meaning of the utterance.

Communicative styles

Communication style is defined operationally in terms of nine descriptors or subconstructs: attentive, relaxed, friendly, precise, dominant, impression leaving, open, dramatic, animated and argumentative (Emanuel, 2013). Every person will produce more than one communication style while speaking. The only matter is the level, and it might be greater or less degree. Robert Norton developed nine specific communicator styles typically used in the communication process that inform the nature of the relationship between communicators.

The first style of communication is the dominant style. Communication can appear to be dominant when speakers are speaking frequently, strongly, in a dominating and take-charge manner. Communicators using a dominant style are often perceived by others as individuals who possess high levels of self-confidence. Communicators who prefer this style also rely on the use of body language including recurring eye contact and the negotiation of others' personal space to emphasize communicative dominance.

People communicating can also be dramatic. Norton (1983) indicates that a communicator is enacting the dramatic style when he or she, "manipulates exaggerations, fantasies, stories, metaphor, rhythm, voice and other stylistic devices to highlight and understate content" (p. 65). This style of communication requires the communicator to merge both physical and verbal techniques to create a performance of the message. Communication using this style is often accomplished through storytelling, the application of jokes, and the use of hyperboles. The actual meaning of a dramatic communicator's message may be hidden and could require background knowledge of the communicator to uncover it. Communicators may use this style to deal with negative information they cannot convey to someone else at face value. Other reasons for selecting a dramatic style of communication are to reinforce a communicator's status in the group or to alleviate stress among group members.

Argumentative style of communication usually belongs to people who are not afraid to challenge others, especially if they have evidence to support their position. Consequently, they

expect their communication partners to present similar substantiation when making a claim. Contentious communicators are very precise about the words they use and view communication as being straightforward without any area for delineation. Individuals interacting with someone who uses this style may feel the need to defend themselves, which may result in less focus on the message.

Animated communicators, another type of communicative style, typically reveal more about their thoughts and emotions through body language than through verbal communication. When interacting with communication partners, people who use this style rely heavily on facial expressions to convey meaning. Some of these expressions include eye contact ¹¹ to show interest in a communication partner or to reveal emotions, smiling to show pleasure, and nodding to show support or agreement (Coeling & Cukr, 2000). Communicators using an animated communication style also gesture frequently, using their hands in addition to posture and body positioning to indicate thoughts.

People communication can use impression-leaving style. This communication style is somewhat difficult to distinguish from others because it relies heavily on the impression formed of the sender by the receiver. People who use this style deliver messages in a manner that is unique and easy for receivers to differentiate from other communication partners. This quality makes people using an impression-leaving style easy to remember. It is possible that people who use an impression-leaving style could use another style but communicate in such a way that differentiates them from other people who use that style.

Another style of communicating is a relaxed style. Norton (1983) explains that relaxed communicator styles are indicated by calmness, peace, and serenity. Thus, relaxed communicators are people who approach communication in a relaxed style and appear calm when interacting with their communication partners, even in high-stress situations. This demeanor often provides reassurance to their partners because they do not appear anxious and can make others feel comfortable. Relaxed communicators speak in a natural but confident manner and do not seem to be nervous when observed by communication partners.

The next style of communicating is attentive style in which the communicator is a good listener and lets communication partners know they are being heard. As Norton (1983) explains that the "attentive style signals on ongoing willingness to provide feedback that the person's message is being processed in an alert and/or understanding manner" (p.154). Body language such as eye contact and nodding let communication partners know that the attentive communicator is listening. People who use this style of communication are often regarded as

empathetic and are able to internalize their partner's message, which is one reason that communication partners tend to open up to them.

The open communicator style is used to describe an individual who is conversational, expansive, somewhat frank, possibly outspoken, affable, convivial, gregarious, unreserved, unsecretive, extroverted, and approachable (Norton, 1983). Thus ²⁰ people who use an open style of communication are not afraid to express their thoughts and emotions and will generally let others know how they feel. Open communicators reveal personal information rather quickly when interacting with communication partners, with little regard to the potential outcome. Adjectives used to describe this type of communicator are talkative, approachable, and conversational. An open communication style could be considered a positive or a negative attribute and would depend a great deal on the communication partner's perception.

Communicators also used a friendly style of communication which has a positive effect on their communication partners. This effect results in people seeking interaction with them. Friendly communicators use both body language and verbal communication to reinforce the self-image of others by showing them that they attract people who are friendly. This style of communication is also characterized by the recognition of the accomplishments and value of communication partners. The last style is precise style in which according to Norton (1983), precise styles is "...the degree that the teacher can unambiguously move the students to that knowledge (the course material)" (p. 238). Thus, precise teachers/ presenters are in control of the content. They are able to explain the content or confusion regarding the material.

Research Method

This study employs qualitative research which deals with the ¹⁵ collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive, narrative, and visual data in order to gain insight into a particular phenomenon of interest (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2012). The researchers employ this method to collect and analyze data which are suitable with the purpose of this research in order to get the description about women's language used by the female lecturers in teaching English in the class as well as the reflection of that women's language in the lecturers' communicative styles.

The sources of the data were taken from the recordings of the teaching process in English Literature Program of one state university in Makassar. The researchers selected two female lecturers who had been teaching in the program. The researchers chose two female lecturers since the two lecturers provided interactive discussion in their teaching process. The

two lecturers were recorded three times. The process of teaching which was recorded lasted for one and a half hour. Six long transcriptions were obtained from the recordings. These recordings were then transcribed and analyzed based on women's language features (Lakoff, 1973; 1976; 2004) and communicative styles (Norton, 1983).

The transcribed recordings were then interpreted, elaborated for analysis, and reported. The data analysis applied the technique of Discourse analysis, which is a kind of discipline in linguistic study. Jones (2011, p. 10) refers to discourse analysis as a process of "entextualization, in which activities include transforming actions into texts and texts into action". The teaching process of the lecturers in the class provided the explorations of women's language uses in a particular context, which may bring a significant contribution to the process of analyzing the meaning and context as usually examined in doing discourse analysis.

Findings

This part presents some examples of lecturers' utterances in the process of English language teaching which show the features of women's language. The conversations of the female lecturer 1 (FL1) and the female lecturer 2 (FL2) with the Students (Ss) or one student (S) were discussed in the following extracts:

Lexical Hedges

One of the features of women's language applied by the lecturers in the class is the form of lexical hedges. The following extracts are examples of the use of lexical hedges by the lecturers in teaching English:

Extract 1: Lexical Hedges "Well"

FL1: *Well, now, is it possible to combine the present and the past?*

Ss: *No*

FL1: *Well, just try. No, yes. Now, well, you are between yes and no. Now, try to combine two sentences. Okay, you just imagine that you see a man and the man in the past give you a present. How can you combine the sentences? Well, one by one. Well, the first is I see a man, I see a man. Who is the man?*

Extract 2: Lexical Hedges "Well" and "Maybe"

FL1: *Well, this is a writing paragraph, Okay. People name it if they write ideas from their respective heads. Although I may see there are some of*

*the same, such as less listening, cultural currents. Well, **maybe** you read the same source, but anyway, the sentence is different well.*

Extract 3: Lexical Hedges “I think”

*FL2: Okay, you do not know in say what? what? What is what? **I think. I think about.. I think** about something and what is something that? I think something ...*

*S: Something that we want to know, **I mean***

FL2: Well, something. When we talk about something, then we refer to what?

S: It refers to a thing

*FL2: No No. Well, when we talk about something.. **Well**, that is, yeah.. Something refers yea something..good..so what is what?*

The extracts above show the use of lexical hedges by the lecturers in teaching English in the class. In extract 1, the lecturer used “well” in her explanation about the use of present and past tense. In the first turn, she uttered “well” to begin her question. Next, she also used it to explain more about the materials. It can be seen in this extract that the use of “well” functions to keep the flow of her explanation in the class. In the second extract, besides the use of “well” at the beginning of her sentence, she also used another hedge which can be seen in the use of “maybe”. This hedge also functions to help her in her conversation in order to keep fluent in her explanation. In extract 3, beside the use of “well”, she also used “I think”, “I mean” which are all the kinds of hedges which are used to keep the flow of her conversation in the class. Therefore, it can be seen in these three extracts that the lecturers applied many kinds of hedges in the class in order to help them explain their subjects in the class.

Intensifiers

Another feature of women’s language applied by the lecturers in the class is the use of intensifiers. The extracts below are the examples of the use of those intensifiers by the lecturers in the class:

Extract 4: Using Intensifier

*FL1: **So** today we will start for the subject Introduction to literature to literature, anyone has read something? about this subject? Maybe read something about literature, what is literature.. no one? **So** all of you knew about.. nothing? Mam*

just wants to ask you... Who has read the literary work here? What has been read?"

Ss: poetry

Extract 5: Using Intensifier

*FL1: Um..your assignment two weeks ago, I **just** want to remind you one more time well. I do not like copy paste. **So** if there is an assignment that is exactly the same I'll not give value both ways. because there is in this class did it.*

Ss: (silent)

FL1: Suci, please share it (the assignment)!

Extract 6: Using Intensifier

*FL2: No, okay, then, kita lihat emm last definition a by Katamba word refers to a particular physical real section of the lexeme in speech or writing. **So** lexeme, apa itu lexeme? Pernah mendengar kata lexeme? Pernah?*

*(No, okay that, we see emm last definition a by Katamba word refers to a particular physical real section of the lexeme in speech or writing. **So** lexeme, what is lexeme? Ever heard the word lexeme? Ever?)*

Ss: Belum

(Not yet)

*FL2: Masa tidak pernah, I have **just** said it*

(How come you never? I just said @)

Ss: (laughing)

The extracts above shows the use of intensifier in the form of "so" and "just". In extract 4, the lecturer used "so" in the beginning of her explanation. In extract 5, beside the word "so", the lecturer used the word "just". These words function as intensifiers which function to reinforce and confirm the meaning of the sentence.

Emphatic Stress

Another feature of women's language appeared in the utterances of the lecturers in teaching English in the class is the use of emphatic stress. The extracts below are the examples of the use of emphatic stress by the lecturers:

Extract 7: Emphatic Stress

FL1: *Jadi hari ini kita mulai untuk mata kuliah introduction to culture. **Ada yang sudah membaca? mungkin membaca sesuatu tentang apa itu sastra apa itu, Awan? semua datang tanpa ada, nggak ada? kalian ndak suka bertanya-tanya dong, bagaimanami? yak siapa yang sudah baca karya sastra disini? Apa Yang sudah dibaca?***

(So, today we will star the introduction to culture class. is anyone reading already maybe something about what is literature, what is awan? all of you came without reading first? So, you all don't like to ask, so why? Okay, anyone has read the literary work? What is it?)

Ss: *Puisi, novel.
(Poetry. Novel?)*

Extract 8: Emphatic Stress

FL2: *itulah yg disebut dengan kata. oke ..you know **Richard** ? no? sendiri you know ? That is called word. Okay.. you know Richard ? no ? you know?"*

Ss: *no*

FL2: *Okay, let see apa itu lexim. pernah mendengar kata lexim ? pernah
(let see what is lexem .have you ever hear it ? ever ?)*

Ss: *belum
(not yet)*

Extract 9

FL2: *I see a table and the table is an object. And I tell you then, what is an object? and another question word is who. **What is who?***

S: ***Asking someone***

FL2: ***Someone. Okay, someone. Someone can be the subject and can be the object of the sentences. Okay, remember, our subject is structure. And another question words is where. Where, Where? Where is about. I think about***

In the above extracts, the lecturers used some expressions as emphatic stress. In extract 1, the lecturer said "**Ada yang sudah membaca? mungkin membaca sesuatu tentang apa itu**

sastra apa itu". This expression was meant to give a stress on the activities they were going to do in the class. The same case can be seen extract 2 when the lecturer said "***You know Richard? no? sendiri you know ?***". This expression was meant to stress on her explanation. The lecturer wanted to give emphatic stress. In extract 3, the lecturer said, "***Okay remember, our subject is structure***" which was meant also to stress her explanation. The word "remember" was meant to remind the students which can show her emphatic feelings.

Question Tags

Another feature of women's language is the use of questions tags. The following extracts show the use of those question tags by the lecturers:

Extract 10: Question Tag

FL1 : Wattpad. We wattpad kan short story juga ya? bisa juga jadi short story atau novel.

(wattpad. Wattpad is also short story, right? can also be a short story or novel)

Ss: komik

(comic)

Extract 11: Question tag

*FL1: Verb to verb, from verb to read verb, reread, read, read again that much in the know the student again. Ok, repeat again why don't say reread? **Reread, read again yes because the word re means again doing the same thing, in the repeat again, rewrite write again, is it right?***

Extract 12: Question Tag

FL1: Barasanji. Apa lagi? Jadi kalo saya yang bicara budaya, seperti itu saya hubungkan dengan karya sastra maka ketika saya baca karya sastra budaya-budaya seperti itulah yang akan muncul dalam karya sastra. Iya toh?

*(Barasanji. What else? So if I were to speak of culture, as it was connected with the literary work then when I read literary cultures such as that which will appear in the literature. **Isn't it?**)*

Ss: iya

(yes)

In extract 10, the lecturer said, "*Wattpad is also a short story, right*". The use of the word "right" at the end of her sentence is a type of question tag which was meant to ask to make sure that her statement was correct or not. In extract 11, the lecturer said to the students, "*Reread, read again yes because the word *re* means again doing the same thing, in the repeat again, rewrite write again, is it right ?*". In the end, she said, "is it right?". That was the kind of question tag which was aimed to convince her students that what did she said was wrong or right to be believed. The same case can be seen in extract 12 when the lecturer said "*Isn't it?*" at the end of her explanation. That was also a type of question tag which was meant to ensure to the students that her explanation is something which was true. The question tags used by the lecturers in the extracts above functioned to gain more emphasis that what they said in their explanations were already true or correct.

Super Polite Forms

Another feature of women's language is the use of super polite forms. The following extracts show the use of those super polite forms by the lecturers:

Extract 13: Super polite forms

Ss: *Novel*

FL1: *Novel English or Indonesia*

Ss: *Indonesia*

(Indonesian)

FL1: ***thank you** that's fine. Ada lagi (one of the superpolite forms)*

(thank you that's fine. Any more)

Ss: *short story*

S: *cerita yang di ambil dari cerita Ramayana itu di pulau Jawa dan karya sastra tersebut akan berbeda dengan karya sastra tersebut berbeda dengan karya sastra di Eropa...*

(the story taken from the Ramayana story on the island of Java and the literary work will be different from the literary works are different from the works of literature in Europe...)

FL1: *ok? **Thank you** ada lagi yang mau ngomong*

*(ok? **Thank you** there's more who wants to talk)*

Extract 14: Super Polite forms

FL2: Okay. **Please** pose your note put on your paper on your base, write down your name...Okay, then. I think just all, submits the work ... okay stop writing attention **please** .. okay the class stop writing submits the work ..

Extract 15: Super Polite Forms

FL2: oh oh. Ria angraeni, Ria angraeni mana orangnya?

oh oh. Ria angraeni, Ria angraeni where is she?'

Ria angraeni : (berjalan dan mengambil tugas)

(walking and taking assignments)'

FL2: **tabe' dek**

(Sorry dek)

FL2: Nur rahma

In extract 13, the lecturer used the superpolite form in her expression when she said "**thank you**" many times. In extract 14, the lecturer used "**please**" in her instruction. The same case can be seen in extract 15, the lecturer used an apologetic term derived from Bugis-Makassar expression "**tabe**" which meant "excuse me". Those expressions in extracts above are a feature of superpolite forms which are also features of women's language.

Discussion

This study had explored the application of women's language features in the way the female lecturers communicate in the teaching process in the class. There are fifteen extracts of conversations taken as samples of expressions from the female lecturers which were analyzed to find out the ³¹ features of women's language. This finding shows the existence of "women's language" in the teaching process of the lecturers in the class. Findings from this study also show that in any type of communication where women interact, women's language features also existed. The female lecturers observed in this study (FL1 and FL2) also proved to use several features of women's language in their teaching process. Lakoff (1973; 1976; 2004) and Tannen (1990; 1994) had previously observed the existence of women's language as one characteristics of women in communicating. Findings in this study also show that lecturers in the study applied some features of women's language.

The first feature is the lexical hedges (extract 1-3). The use of lexical hedges, for example, were used when they talk in order to fill the silence within the conversation or even they use it for giving them time ⁴⁰to think about what they are going to say next (Lakoff, 1976). Talbot (2010) proposed that hedges or fillers ³⁷are used to reduce the force of utterance. A study by Mirzapour and Mahand (2012) shows that hedges had a significant function as communicative strategies to increase or reduce the force of statements. Hedges also functioned ²⁷to signal the speaker's lack of confidence or to assert something tentatively. Another study by Jalilifar, and Alavi-Nia (2012) had also proved that hedges can ¹⁹assist politicians to increase or decrease commitment, blur or sharpen the boundaries between good and evil, and bolster or emasculate solidarity. Lexical hedges are usually used by women as a weakening tool since it expresses uncertainty and is also a way to soften an utterance. As can be seen in this study, hedges helped the lecturers to maintain the flow of the conversation.

The second feature is intensifiers (extract 4-6). The intensifier is an element that is used with other expressions to indicate an attempt to intensify the meaning of the expression they modify. Lakoff (1976) categorized intensifier ¹⁶as part of the hedging where it weakens the feeling of the speaker in the language. In this study, intensifiers were employed by the lecturers to intensify the meaning they wanted to say. This feature relates to gender as women, in seeking to be heard, tend ¹⁶to use intensifiers to boost the language, or to "intensify a proposition's force" (Holmes, 2013). A study by Amir, Abidin, Darus, and Ismail (2012) had also shown that intensifiers were used mostly by women in bloggers showing the characteristics of their women's language. As said by Lakoff (1975, cited in Homes 2001) that women "use intensifying devices to persuade their addressee to take them seriously" (p. 287) because they are lacking status in society.

The third feature is emphatic stress (extract 7-9). Emphatic stress is utilized to emphasize the utterance or strengthen the meaning of an utterance. Women apply stress in their utterance in order to get attention. Lakoff (2004, cited in Chandra and Yulia, 2018) states that women boosting the force of their utterance because they want to be heard or paid attention. In this study, this feature of women's language was employed to get attention to what they stated in the class.

The fourth feature is question tags (extract 10-12). ¹Tag question is a grammatical structure in which a declarative statement or an imperative is turned into a question by adding

an interrogative fragment called the tag. It is used as a midway between an absolute statement and yes no question (Lakoff, 1976). It can be seen in this study that question tags were used by the lecturers to emphasize their ideas in the class.

The last feature appearing in this study is the use of super polite forms (extract 13-15). The lecturers in this study proved to employ some polite terms in their teaching process. This shows that the female lecturers observed in this study were trying to be polite, although they as lecturers may act dominantly in the class. The aspect of intimacy and solidarity seen in the polite expressions show that the lecturers paid attention to the good flow of communication. Biber and Burges (2000) confirm that ¹³ women's focus in conversation is on 'personal and interactional aspects of conversation', whereas men's focus is more on 'transferring information'. According to Stanton (2001), conversations for women are for the sake of 'developing and preserving intimacy', while for men, 'maintaining power' is more important than other aspects, such as intimacy

This finding also shows that the features of women's language applied by the lecturers helped them in communicating their ideas. This is ³⁶ in line with findings of other studies conducted by Jia (2010) and Rubbyanti (2017). Moreover, regarding the reasons, most respondents claimed that they use those features because they tend to reflect uncertainty and reflect women's lack of confidence in conversation (Febrianti, 2013). According to Lakoff (2004), women's speech style conveys weakness, uncertainty, and unimportance. All of these studies had found that most of the ⁴² women's language is used to reduce the force of the statement. In their teaching process, the lecturers need some strategies to clearly transfer their ideas in teaching. However, since there should be good relation among the participants in the class, the lecturers should try to minimize the unpleasant condition.

The application of those features of women's language by the lecturers in this study shows that, as women, the female lecturers are likely to be good listeners in the class and tend to pay attention to students' need. The features such as using intensifiers, emphatic stress, super polite forms, and tag questions show that women are likely to apply the attentive communicative style. Someone who has an attentive communication style is a good listener and lets communication partners know they are being heard. As Norton (1983) explains that the "attentive style signals on ongoing willingness to provide feedback that the person's message is being processed in an alert and/or understanding manner" (p.154).

Conclusion

These findings also show that women's language can give positive contributions to the ways lecturers communicate and teach in the class. In the class, lecturers need to become a facilitator who can manage and understand students' need. Students have various backgrounds and therefore, teachers or lecturers need to facilitate them in order that they can reach good achievement as learners. This "women's language" can affect the performance of the English lecturers in teaching English in the class. Overall, these above findings show that discourse on gender in education is important and need to be taken into consideration. Issues on women's language in communication need to be a focus of attention of scholars. This study has found that women's language was employed in the teaching process and therefore function a lot to help the communication.

The results of ⁴¹ this study made a significant contribution to the literature of women's language as stated by the above scholars showing men and women differences in communications, such as the tendency of women to be passive, tentative, more intimacy whereas men tend to be active, certain, and more power-oriented. Findings from this study contribute significantly to the study on gender differences in classroom interaction. It becomes also beneficial inputs for practitioners of classroom interaction especially teachers and students in order to create effective classroom interaction by considering the gender differences and others factors which influence the classroom interactions.

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